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Survey shows city cops have lost faith in department leadership

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By Macy Moors



CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (CBS19 NEWS) – The Virginia Police Benevolent Association conducting a Charlottesville Police Survey regarding officers' experience with internal operations and their Command Staff.

The survey found that Charlottesville Police Department officers have lost faith in the leadership of their department.

Survey results show:

- Nearly 84 percent of survey takers believe Chief RaShall Brackney does not have the best interests for the department.
- 71 percent don't feel supported by their leaders.
- 82 percent say they've reduced their normal policing for fear of being targeted by CPD leadership.

"For what really is an abused police department that can't serve their community well because they feel like they can't do anything right. Like they're in an abusive relationship with their command staff," said Michael Wells, the Vice President of the State Benevolent Association.

When survey takers were asked about the department's largest concerns currently, answers included low morale, lack of trust, unfair discipline, and low pay.

Staff members submitted comments such as:

- "This department is a dumpster fire. The chief and her command staff have no morals or ethics and are only looking out for themselves."
- "The only difference between CPD and the Titanic? Deck chairs and a band."

Wells says this survey was conducted after the police department conducted its own questionnaire, but wouldn't release the results.

The association submitted a FOIA request, but the bill would have been \$1,800 and most of the answers likely would have been redacted.

That's when the association took matters into its own hands and reached out to officers.

"About 65 people ended up taking it, and the results were staggering," said Wells. "When I got them I was like, 'Wow. It's worse than I thought.'"

Wells says 18 police officers and 32 staff members have left the police department since October of last year.

"If something's not done, they're going to lose all of these officers, and they're going to pay for training for new officers who come to the realization that they're in an agency that doesn't appreciate them and doesn't support them," he said.

Wells says Brackney declined to meet with him about the survey results this past week.

The Charlottesville Police Department has declined to comment about this on Thursday but does say it plans to release videos regarding officers and leadership roles next week.

Wells says he's seen the videos and they're not a threat.

"It's officers just being silly, and videoing themselves in their car and sending it out, dealing with the pandemic last year," he said.

Wells says it drives home the point that officers are worried about retribution from department leadership.

He adds there was no talk of releasing the videos prior to the association getting these survey results.

City responds to police survey results ([//www.cbs19news.com/story/44567607/city-responds-to-police-survey-results](http://www.cbs19news.com/story/44567607/city-responds-to-police-survey-results))
Councilor, PCRB members speak out on CPD survey ([//www.cbs19news.com/story/44567608/council-and-members-of-police-civilian-review-board-speak-out-on-cpd-survey](http://www.cbs19news.com/story/44567608/council-and-members-of-police-civilian-review-board-speak-out-on-cpd-survey))

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